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Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-20 DODE-00 PM-07 AF-10 ARA-16 SAM-01

INR-10 DRC-01 RSC-01 NSC-10 /091 W
---------- 057231
R 041141Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4836
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
COMUSSAG
AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 1673

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (COMUSSAG ADDED AS INFO
ADDRESSEE PER ORIGINATING POST)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, HINT, CB
SUBJ: ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL'S VISIT TO PHNOM PENH

1. SUMMARY. IN TALKS WITH HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL MEMBERS SIRPK MATAK AND CHENG HENG AND WITH PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET, ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL DISCUSSED IMPROVING MILITARY PERFORMANCE, MILITARY-CIVILIAN COOPERATION AND HONESTY IN GOVERNMENT. BORET REFERRED TO NEW DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE HE HOPES TO UNDERTAKE IN SEA, AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICAN BEFORE NEXT UNGA, AND AGREED ON IMPORTANCE OF ATTACKING CORRUPTION TO BUILD UP CONFIDENCE IN GKR ON PART OF KHMER STUDENTS, U.S. CONGRESS AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS

LON NOL WAS OBLIGED TO CANCEL HIS MEETING WITH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY ON ORDERS OF HIS DOCTORS. END SUMMARY,

2. DURING HIS FEBRUARY 3-4 VISIT TO PHNOM PENH, ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL HAD PRIVATEHLESSIONS WITH HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT CHENG HENG, COUNCIL MEMBER SIRIK MATAK AND PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET AND MET VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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GKR'S OTHER PRINCIPAL MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERS AT A DINNER

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GIVEN BY CHARGE' AND A LUNCHEON TODAY HOSTED BY THE PRIME MINISTER. PRESIDENT LON NOL ON THE ORDERS OF HIS DOTLORS WAS FORCED TO CANCEL HIS MEETING AND LUNCH WITH THE SECRETARY. MR. INGERSOLL ALSO TOURED THE FANK TRAINING CENTER AT KAMBOL AND PAID BRIEF VISITS TO THE REFUGEE CAMP AT O BEKAAM AND PHNOM PENH PORT FACILITIES.

3. SIRIK MATAK AND CHENG HENG BOTH DWELT ON CONTINUING INEFFICIENCY AND CORRUPTION IN FANK. SIRIK MATAK EMPHASIZED REQUIREMENT TO RE-ORGANIZE ARMY, ELIMINATE "PHANTOM TROOPS", AND INSTILL DISCIPLINE IN ARMED FORCES. HE NOTED CINC SOSTHEN FERNANDEZ HAS DRAMA CRITICISM FOR HIS FAILURE TO ACT IN THESE MATTERS, AND ADDED THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL SOSTHENE AND MARSHAL LON NOL TAKE ACTION FROM THE TOP TO CORRECT THE SITUATION.

4. DISCUSSION WITH LONG BORET COVERED FULL RANGE OF PROBLEMS FACING GKR. PRIME MINISTER EBURESSED SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE OF HIS NEW GOVERNMENT TO DATE, BUT NOTED NEED TO DEVELOP CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN CIVIL AND MILITARY STRUCTURES, CONTINUING POLITICAL AGITATION AMONG STUDENTS, AND GENERAL INFLATION WHICH IS ADVERSELY AFFECTING CIVIL SERVANTS AND MILITARY. WITH RESPECT TO STUDENTS, PRIME MINISTER OBSERVED SOME HIGHLY ACTIVE COMMUNIST INFILTRATORS WERE AFFECTING STUDENT ATTITUDES, BUT GKR INTENDS DEVELOP DIALOGUE WITH STUDENTS TO AMELIORATE ISSUE. CHARGE' ENDERS ENCOURAGED PRIME MINISTER FIRST TO ESTABLISH CONFIDENCE AMONG STUDENTS THROUGH DIALOGUE BETWEEN HIS CIVILIAN MEMBERS OF THE GKR AND STUDENTS, AND THEN TO BRING MILITARY COMMANDERS INTO DIALOGUE SO THAT STUDENTS WOULD BE ABLE INCREASINGLY TO RELATE TO ARMED FORCES AND MILITARY SITUATION CONFRONTING NATION.

5. LONG BORET ACKNOWLEDGED MAJOR PROBLEM COMDRONTING ARMY AT THIS TIME IS MANPOWER. HIS NEW GOVERNMENT HAS TO DATE INVOLVDED ITSELF IN MILITARY AFFAIRS ONLY WITH RESPECT TO CONSCRIPTION, BUT PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THAT WITHIN FEAODAYS HE AND MEMBERS OF HIS GOVERNMENT WILL BE MEETING WITH GENERAL SOSTHENE AND OTHER MILITARY LEADERS TO DISCUSS BROADER RANGE OF MILITARY/CIVILIAN PROBLEMS, CONFIDENTIAL

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INCLUDING COOPERATION. PGRME MINISTER ALSO OBSERVED THAT REFUGEE ASSISTANCE HAS NOT BEEN AS EFFECDVELY UTILIZED AS IT COULD BE, AND HE INTENDED TO USE NEW RESETTLEMENT FOUNDATION TO CORRECT THE SITUATION.

6. TURNING TO GKR INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS, PRIME MINISTER DESCRIBED STEPS HE IS TAKIMT TO IMPROVE REPUBLIC'S POSITION PRIOR TO FALL 1947 UNGA. HE INTENDS IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO

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SEND FOREIGN MINISTER TO SEA IQUNTRIES TO CONSOLIDATE GKR
SITUATION, AND TO IMPROVE GKR RELATIONS, IN PARTICULAR,
WITH RTG AND GVN. SUBSEQUENTLY, GKR INTENDS TO UNDERTAKE
DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE IN AFRICA, AND HAS INVITED CERTAIN
AFRICANS TO VISIT PHNOM PENH. GOVERNMENT IS ALSO ATTEMPTING

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PHNOM PENH 1673

EXPAND ITS TIES WITH LATIN AMERICANS, INCLUDING HAITI,
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, COLUMBIA, URUGUAY, ARGENTINA, AMD CHILE.
WITH RESPECT TO LATTER, LONG BORET SUGGESTED USG INTERVENTION
IN BEHALF OF GKR WOULD BE HELPFUL. IF POSSIBLE, GKR WOULD

LIKE TO
ESTABLISH EMBASSY IN SANTIAGO, BUT, FAILING THAT,
WOULD LOCATE MISSION IN MOMTEVIDEO. CHARGE' ENCOURAGE GKR
TO UNDERTAKE LOW KEY INITIATIVE IN WASHINGTON OR NEW YORK
WITH CHILEAN REP SINCE CHILE HAS NOW EXPELLED GRUNK. CHARGE'
URGED LONG BORET TO AVOID PUSHING TOO HARD IN THESE CONTACTS
AT THIS TIME, AND INDICATED USG WILL RENDER SUPPLEMENTARY
EFFORT WHEN TIMING IS APPROPRIATE.

7. PRIME MINISTER OBSERVED THAT GKR IS EXPERIENCING SOME PROBLEM
WITH GVN, SINCE GKR HAS LEARNED VIETNAMESE HAVE SETTLED ON
CAMBODIAN SIDE OF BOREDER AND GKR IS ANXIOUS TO HAVE VIETNAMESE
REMOVED FROM KHMER TERRITORY. CHARGE' TOOK OPPORTUNITY
TO ENCOURAGE PRIME MINISTER, DURING GKR DISCUSSIONS WITH
GVN OR BORDER ISSUE, TO ALSO RAISE GULF OF SIAM JURISDICTIONAL

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DISPUTES AND DISTRIBUTION OF BLOCKED FRENCH FRANC ASSETS.

8. DURING DISCUSSIONS WITH TWO HIGH POLITICAL COUNCIL
MEMBERS AND PRIME MINISTER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL
REPEATEDLY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF GKR IMPROVING MILITARY
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PERFORMANCE THROUGH REDUCTION OF CORRUPTION AND
ADOPTION OF MORE EFFICIENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES.
PRAISING GKR EFFORTS TO DATE TO ORGANIZE ITSELF AGAINST
NORTH VIETNAMESE AND KHMER COMMUNIST ATTACKS, INGERSOLL
URGED ELIMINATION OF "PHNOTOM" PROBLEM IN FANK, AND EXPRESSED
HOPE THAT SUCCESSFUL MILITARY EFXTRTS DURING REMAINING MONTHS
OF DRY SEASON WOULD HELP PERSUADE ENEMY TO COME TO BARGAINING
TABLE. HE NOTED IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING NEGOTIATING
CONTACTS WITH ENEMY AT THIS STAGE, EVEN THOUGH IT IS UNLIKELY
ANY SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONSCAN EVOLVE UNTIL COMMUNISTS
ARE PERSUADED GKR WILL SURVIVE. LONG BORET COMMENTED THAT,
BASED ON INTELLIGENCE AVAILABLE TO GKR, IT APPEARS ENEMY
ALREADY RECOGNIZES THAT IT CANNOT SUCCEED MILITARILY DURING
THIS OFFENSIVE.

9. INGERSOLL ALSO NOTED THE PROBLEM WITH CORRUPTION SEVERELY
SHAKES CONFIDENCE OF POPULATION AND STYMIES YOUTHFUL IDEALISM
ON GKR'S SIDE. BUT, IF THESE PROBLEMS CAN BE ADDRESSED EFFECTIVELY,
NOT ONLY WILL GKR FIGHT BETTER BUT US ASSISTANCE
CAN CERTAINLY BESUSTAINED AND CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT OBTAINED.
INGERSOLL ALSO ENCOURAGE PRIME MINISTER TO
NURTURE GOOD RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN PRESS. LONG BORET AGREED
WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS SUGGESTION.
ENDERS

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